



**AEIPS**

Associação para o Estudo e Integração Psicossocial

## **Empowerment and Mutual Help Center**

### **Mission of this center**

To increase the participation, influence and leadership of people with mental health in the Community Center, at a social and individual level. The Empowerment and Mutual Help Center is co-coordinated and carried out exclusively by members with experience of mental health of the Community Center.

### **Activities:**

#### **1. Contacts with society**

Developing contacts with mental health networks, both national and international, to defend their own rights.

#### **2. Campaign against Stigma.**

Sharing personal experiences in schools, university and other places in the community

#### **3. Mutual Help**

This is a group of members that meets once a week, without the participation of support technicians, who can offer each other help.

#### **4. Women's Group**

It is a group consisting of all the female participants of the Center that meets once a week for mutual help and discussions.

#### **5. Journal.**

It is a quarterly publication with national and international reviews on recovery, empowerment and rights and it addresses people with mental illness.



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The Empowerment and Mutual Help Center read the text of the green paper and arrived at the following conclusions:

### Question 1

The importance of mental health in the European Union in terms of strategic goals, such as changing Europe's course toward prosperity and improvement the quality of life of its citizens, is that, without mental health there is no health. Without health, those goals may not be met, and without mental health, many problems may arise from a social, work and cultural level. This may cause lack of work output, a low quality of life and huge costs in medication, health services and social security.

Furthermore, in several EU countries, a series of human rights have been denied to people with mental health.

### Question 2

We agree that the priorities mentioned in section 5, especially clauses 3 and 4, of the strategy proposed by the European Commission.

We think these guidelines are few, and we would suggest adopting a policy more wide in scope, not only in terms of encompassing and comparing the different policies and practices to be undertaken by all EU members, but also in terms of including the following goals which seem crucial:

- Developing programmes of "Support Employment", which consists, of determining employment preferences, finding a training programmer after the support employment professionals make the various contacts and in a competitive employment environment, the goal is to obtain an employment environment, after completion of the training programmer. The traditional employment model of factory workers or dry cleaners' specifically designed for people with mental illness. If these people can find these employment places, then they can also land a job place anywhere else.
- Promoting anti-stigma campaigns, which could lead the entire population to think differently of people with mental illness, as people with rights.

### Question 3

After analyzing the sections nº 6 and nº 7, we conclude that the suggestions presented and measures undertaken meet our goals, which improve the quality of life of people with mental illness.



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